

# Law Enforcement News

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## Hiding in plain sight

### Survey says thousands of sex offenders can't be accounted for

At any given time, nearly one-quarter of the nation's convicted sex offenders cannot be located because they failed to register with local law enforcement as required under Megan's Law, according to the results of a telephone survey released last month by a child advocacy group.

The informal poll by Parents for Megan's Law, a nonprofit group with chapters nationwide, was prompted by an Associated Press report in January which asserted that California had lost track of at least 33,000 sex offenders, or 44 percent of those who were supposed to register in the past year.

After contacting all 50 states to ask about the accuracy of their registries, the organization found that on average, states were unable to account for 24 percent of sex offenders who were supposed to be in their databases. New York and Texas were two of 19 states which said they were either unable to track how many were failing to register, or simply did not know.

Unsettling though the statistics may be, the reality of convicted rapists, child molesters and other sexual predators slipping through the cracks is nothing

new, said Scott Matson of the Center for Sex Offender Management, a nonprofit project funded by the Department of Justice.

"I first surveyed the states back in 1996 to find out what the compliance rates were and back then there were problems," he told Law Enforcement News. "So it was an issue even when the registries were much smaller. It's simply that you don't have anyone who's looking after these guys on a daily basis."

Among the states and jurisdictions where tracking efforts have faltered are:

¶ **Hidalgo County, Texas**, where a three-month investigation by a local newspaper, *The Monitor*, found that only two officers from the county's Adult Probation Department were responsible for checking on 257 sex offenders — double the caseload recommended by the state. Another officer has since been added. Moreover, the newspaper said, the agency has lost track of more than 60 sex offenders.

¶ **Louisiana**, where as of January, 360 of the state's nearly 3,000 sex offenders were known to be out of compliance with Megan's Law.

¶ **Maine**, where some 2,000 convicted sex predators missed a deadline last September for registering with the State Bureau of Identification.

¶ **Minnesota**, which could not account for 20 percent of the nearly 11,000 offenders who should have been in the state's database. Of the 2,227 that could not be found, almost half failed to return verification of address forms to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. In Minneapolis, 360 of the city's 1,211 offenders have not complied with registration, nor have a quarter of the 826 in St. Paul.

"I think the problem begins with the sex offenders themselves," observed Laura Ahearn, executive director of Parents for Megan's Law. "We are actually asking the most cunning of our criminals to take part in an honor system. If we have a great expectation that sex offenders are going to be providing up-to-date or accurate information to law enforcement agencies and states administering Megan's Law, I think that expectation is just unreasonable."

Karen Terry, a criminologist at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the author of "Sex Offender Registry and

Notification. A Megan's Law Source Book," said that while she was not familiar with the recent study, its results did not surprise her.

Most states allow Level One and Level Two offenders to re-register with police once a year, with individuals designated as Level Three, the most dangerous, are required to verify their addresses every 90 days. What happens, Terry told L.E.N., is that either they do not show up to register, or they give a false address. Some give a correct address, then move and do not re-register. Police end up with a fairly high rate of incorrect addresses as opposed to people who have just absconded, she said.

"The problem is that there just aren't enough resources in most states to have police going and checking that the offender is still living at the address that they're giving," said Terry.

While requiring sex offenders to register provides some added protection, without follow-up, it is not especially effective in preventing future incidents. "There's just not enough resources for it," she said. "We have over

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## Compstat-type anticrime programs put down new roots far from New York

After visiting a number of jurisdictions around the state last year, officials with the Hernando County, Fla., Sheriff's Department took bits and pieces of the Compstat-type crime reduction programs they studied, and developed their own initiative to improve the agency's crime-fighting abilities.

Launched this month, STARCOM — short for Sheriff's Tracking Accountability and Responsiveness to Crime Oppression Management — divides the county into three districts with a full complement of officers assigned to each.

"As we researched into Compstat and saw the effect it was having in the jurisdictions where it was implemented, the sheriff felt this would be

an approach we ought to be taking to have a similar effect," Lt. Joe Paez, who served on the research committee, said in an interview with Law Enforcement News. "In those municipalities where it was put into place, it impacted their crime statistics. The number of crimes that were being reported or occurring decreased. We felt this was an approach we should be taking."

As part of STARCOM, each district will have a lieutenant whose role will be akin to that of a "minipolice chief," said Sheriff Richard Nugent. Some divisions, such as narcotics, vice, and major crimes, will remain "global," serving all parts of Hernando.

Nugent redistributed personnel, reassigning commanders, detectives, forensic personnel, traffic and community

policing officers to each of the new districts. The responsibility for activity in the areas will belong to the district commander, who will be given the resources to address problems, said Paez.

"Philosophically, it's the same as Compstat," he said.

While lieutenants are not going to be held accountable for increases in crime, they will be called upon to explain what they are doing about it, said Nugent. For example, if shoplifting is a continuing problem, they will be responsible for coming up with a strategy to combat it.

Top brass from different districts will come in for a six-week review every two weeks. Those reviews, with some restrictions, will be open to the public.

Nugent told The St. Petersburg Times that the reorganization would help break down the barriers to internal communication that have often impeded efficient police work.

Crime statistics which are now held in various locations will be computerized and centralized by the STARCOM coordinator for easy access. The coordinator will also track to see whether the district plan is being adhered to and whether it is working, said Nugent.

"The key is accountability," he said. Accountability is also the chief component of a year-old Compstat-like program in Mount Pleasant, S.C.

Called the Accountability, Comparison and Evaluation, or ACE system, the initiative makes each of the police

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## Hybrid cars electrify Florida sheriffs



They're good for the environment, they do their part to help reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil and, best of all for law enforcement, hybrid gas-electric cars can potentially save agencies thousands of dollars in fuel costs over the life of the vehicle.

In the past two years, the Martin County, Fla., Sheriff's Department has added nine Toyota Priuses and four Honda Civic hybrids to its 311-car fleet. Sheriff Robert L. Crowder launched the program after seeing hybrid cars at an

Earth Day celebration. Sgt. Jenell Atlas, a department spokeswoman, told Law Enforcement News that Crowder was so intrigued that the next day he drove to a local Toyota dealership that had a Prius on the lot. He promptly purchased the Priuses and assigned them to the agency's non-first responder staff, including some detectives, victims' advocates, community relations and deputies who serve civil process.

Crowder said he expects to buy 50 more of the \$20,000 hybrids in the next

year or so. Eventually, he told The Wall Street Journal, he would like to move all of his detectives into hybrids. Although the vehicles cost about \$5,000 more than a similar-sized Toyota with a conventional engine, they cost \$3,000 less than the full-sized, gas-guzzling Ford Crown Victoria, the vehicle used most often for police work.

The Florida Sheriff's Association bought 100 hybrids last year, but Wyatt Earp, the Marion County, Fla., fleet manager (and, yes, a descendant of the legendary lawman whose name he bears), believes that figure will soar as

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(Left) Part of the Martin County, Fla., Sheriff's Department's mini-fleet of hybrid gas-electric vehicles.



# Around the Nation

## Northeast



**CONNECTICUT** — Hartford Police Chief Bruce P. Marquis and Kevin O'Connor, the U.S. Attorney for Connecticut, met Feb. 19 and pledged their mutual support in making drug and gun crime in the city's North End a top priority. Marquis said that offenders can now expect to be subjected to federal indictments and stiffer and longer penalties. The chief said that one of the reasons he went to the federal authorities was the ongoing manpower shortage that makes it difficult to assign resources to the North End.

With help from a federal grant, the state has received about two dozen mass-decontamination trailers, which can be deployed in the event of a biological or chemical emergency. They can process about 100 people an hour — getting a contaminated person clean enough to be evaluated by medical personnel.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA** — City police have abandoned a seven-digit non-emergency number for residents and replaced it with a 311 line. Residents will still dial 911 for emergencies.

**MAINE** — Portland Police Officer Kevin J. Haley has filed a defamation lawsuit against Vincent Dorazio, who accused Haley and another officer of police brutality and won a \$600,000 settlement from the city. Two years ago, the officers chased down Dorazio and struck and handcuffed him after mistaking him for someone else. The city found Dorazio's charge of brutality credible and paid the settlement, but a grand jury has since concluded that the officers didn't commit a crime and used reasonable force.

**MARYLAND** — Proposed legislation would make stalking a felony and make it easier to convict anyone who engages in a pattern intended to intimidate or terrorize a victim.

**MASSACHUSETTS** — Randolph school officials have failed to persuade town selectmen to return school resource officer Anthony Marag to the local middle school, despite acting Police Chief Robert Churchill's assertion that there is enough money in a state grant to cover overtime costs related to the assignment for the remainder of the year.

Heightened security at Boston's Logan International Airport has sharply increased the cost of airport state police, according to the Massachusetts Port Authority. Payroll costs last year for Troop F, which is based at the airport, were \$14.1 million, up from \$9.8 million in 2001. Of the 2002 amount, \$6.4 million represented overtime costs. Five officers in Troop F earned at least \$200,000 last year, and almost a dozen made more than \$100,000 in overtime.

**NEW YORK** — Just minutes after Syracuse police Detective Michael Smith helped two women start their car, they allegedly stole his cell phones. Smith, who saw the women stranded on the side of the road, drove them to get gasoline and then got their car started while they waited in his car to stay warm. When he realized his cell

phones were missing from his back seat, he caught up with them. The two denied taking the phones but he found them in the snow outside their car.

New York City police credit a crack-down on turnstile jumpers for the 20-percent drop in subway crime. From Jan. 1 to Feb. 23, the police had busted nearly 2,500 fare-busters — a 62-percent increase over the same period last year. So far this year, robberies have declined by 13.4 percent, assaults by 17 percent, and grand larcenies by 25 percent.

Former Suffolk County police officer Frank Wright, who was scheduled to go on trial in February on charges of violating the civil rights of five women, has mistreated another nine women, according to federal prosecutors. Wright's attorney said his client is innocent and that the issue at trial will be the credibility of the alleged victims.

As a protest against an expanded City Council ban on fake firearms that "substantially duplicate" real weapons, members of the New York Libertarian Party went to East Harlem on Feb. 6 and tried to give away hundreds of water pistols outside a local public school. The group was met by an angry crowd from the neighborhood chanting, "Get out of Harlem!" There were no takers for the free squirt guns among local school kids.

About 20,000 New York City police officers will soon be equipped with gas masks, thanks to a \$4-million federal grant, but Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton said that the city and the police department still need several hundred million dollars more because of the additional burdens placed on it because of the threat of terrorist attack. The recent high alert cost the department more than \$1 million in just four days for overtime and other costs. Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly contends that by protecting the city's landmarks and the financial district, the NYPD is protecting the United States.

**VERMONT** — The police squad that investigates sex crimes in Franklin and Grand Isle counties has been holding fund raisers since it lost a \$30,000 federal grant, in part due to homeland security needs. The unit's \$250,500 budget is covered mainly through grants and in-kind donations from the state police, which provides the unit's two full-time investigators. Many of the 19 towns that the squad covers are asked to pay \$500 a year, but many do not pay. The \$30,000 federal grant was supposed to pay for an administrative assistant.

## Southeast



**ARKANSAS** — Cleveland County Sheriff Paul King says he is getting closer to identifying a thief who steals women's underwear. The burglar, who has struck 14 times in the last two years, suffered a cut at one of the sites, allowing investigators to get a DNA sample.

**FLORIDA** — Former Jacksonville police officer Karl Waldon was sentenced Jan. 27 to four life terms for

strangling a convenience store owner during a botched robbery. The victim, Sami Safar, was carrying \$51,000 he had just withdrawn from the bank when Waldon stopped him under the ruse of a false warrant.

The Citrus County Sheriff's Office got all the information it needed on William Evans, accused of sexually abusing a 7-year-old girl, when they left him in an interrogation room with his girlfriend. While his girlfriend performed a sexual act on him in the interview room, the 44-year-old Evans discussed his assault of the child and detailed the acts he had performed on her. Evans has reportedly been arrested six times since 1988, including other arrests for sex-related offenses.

A circuit judge has overturned a jury verdict that found Sarasota County Sheriff's deputy John Walsh wrongfully arrested Walter Bryant as malicious payback for cursing him. Walsh had been responding to a domestic dispute call that involved a woman being beat up by her boyfriend. When he got to the area, he claims, he saw Bryant walking quickly and sweating profusely, and thus thought he was a suspect. Walsh stopped him and Bryant started mouth-ing off. In the meantime, another officer had to respond to the domestic dispute and the victim of that incident has filed her own suit claiming that deputies should have helped her sooner. More than 26 minutes elapsed between her 911 call and the response.

In Naples, 28-year-old Benjamin Venegas has been arrested and charged with pretending to be a police officer, after he allegedly pulled a car over and tried to scam \$1,000 from the driver. Detectives said that his car had been rigged with police lights to resemble a police vehicle.

**LOUISIANA** — Two companies have volunteered billboard space for the serial killer task force to use to post information on the death of Lafayette resident Trineisha Colomb. The deaths of four southern Louisiana women have so far been linked to the killer.

Jeffrey Curtis, 31, was arrested Jan. 26 for impersonating a police officer when he tried to stop a motorist for a traffic violation and then followed the motorist home. The driver reportedly called 911 and Curtis fled. He then followed Curtis until St. Tammany Parish sheriff's deputies stopped them and arrested Curtis.

Jefferson Parish Sheriff Harry Lee, who said he weighs 375 pounds and just can't carry the weight, has decided to take drastic measures after years of trying everything from diets to hypnosis. Lee will undergo gastric bypass surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center sometime after Mardi Gras in early March. Lee, who is 70, said that for the years he had left he wanted a better quality of life.

**NORTH CAROLINA** — A federal appeals court has overturned the death sentence of Timothy Allen, a black man who was convicted of killing a white state trooper, Raymond Worley, during a traffic stop in 1985. The appeals court said that prosecutors used peremptory challenges to reject 11 prospective jurors because they were black. Allen was convicted by a jury that had six blacks

and six whites.

**VIRGINIA** — The Richmond City Council has given police the green light on installing a \$375,000 video-surveillance system in crime-plagued neighborhoods. Police Chief Andre Parker, referring to the 11 homicides in the city in January, said that Richmond was in a crisis stage. The City Council also appropriated \$675,000 for 15 to 17 take-home marked police cruisers, as well as money to hire additional staff members, the purchase of crime-scene equipment and homeland-security equipment, and \$300,000 to help Parker recruit more police.

Mario Roberto Keen, 35, who was killed by police after fatally wounding Officer Sheila Herring-Patrick, was a convicted drug dealer who was in this country illegally. Patrick was responding to a report of gunfire in a bar after Keen shot another man. He had been deported to Jamaica in 1997 after his drug conviction and had been turned back once after trying to get into the country with an illegal passport. It is not known how he made it back.

About 500 people attended a January 25 Community Crime Control meeting in Richmond, which was facilitated by Peter Bellmio, a law-enforcement consultant hired by the city. The meeting was the first in a series designed to devise a crime-control plan for the city. The number of homicides jumped to at least 84 in 2002 from 70 in 2001 and the city had 11 homicides in January of this year.

## Midwest



**ILLINOIS** — A number of police officers in Central Illinois last year made drunken-driving arrests an average of at least once per week. Peoria officer Greg Metz, a 19-year veteran, made 133 DUI arrests. State Trooper Mike Conners made 60 DUI arrests, and East Peoria Police Officer Rich Brodrick made exactly 52.

A federal judge has freed Belleville officials from federal oversight of city hiring practices, dissolving a consent decree stemming from claims of racism. The Justice Department had sued the department in 1993, alleging that the city's residency requirement for prospective employees effectively excluded blacks from jobs. Under the decree, the city dropped that requirement and adopted a new police exam in response to accusations that the old exam discriminated against blacks. The judge said that the objectives of the consent decree have been met.

Clayton Harris Jr., 24, died in Venice Feb. 12 when a police car from the neighboring town of Brooklyn crashed through a metal fence and ran him over after he fled a traffic stop. The investigation into the incident was being handled by the Illinois State Police. When relatives of the victim asked why an officer from another jurisdiction would pull someone over in Venice, State Trooper Ralph Timmins said that many of the area's departments have mutual-aid agreements.

**KENTUCKY** — A federal judge has

dismissed a lawsuit brought against the city of Louisville and four police officers by the executors of Louis Wade Hermann's estate. The suit accused the officers of violating Hermann's civil rights because they failed to rescue him when, handcuffed, he jumped into the Ohio River and drowned. The police had contacted a dive-rescue team when it happened and the judge wrote that the police made a reasonable judgment not to attempt or to let bystanders attempt a rescue before trained personnel arrived.

**MICHIGAN** — The number of state troopers has fallen by 200, to 1,142, in the past three years, and that number is expected to shrink further as the gap widens between police income and expenses. A surge in retirements and the state's inability to train and hire replacements are cited as the main reasons for the shortfall. Only 13 state police posts are operating 24 hours a day, compared to all 64 posts three years ago.

**OHIO** — In a 7-to-2 vote, the Cincinnati City Council has adopted an expanded hate-crimes law that will set additional penalties for crimes based on sex, sexual orientation, age or physical or mental disability. The existing law covered crimes based on race, religion, color and national origin.

**WEST VIRGINIA** — Although the U.S. Department of Labor sees the number of jobs in criminal justice increasing between 21 and 35 percent nationwide by 2010, across West Virginia, fewer people are applying for jobs as police officers. Two written exams given by the state police in recent months each drew 1,200 applicants, but fewer than half showed up each time. Although a lot of attention is being paid to recruiting at colleges, fewer college graduates are reportedly looking for jobs with the police. Dr. George Higgins, chairman of the criminal justice department at West Virginia State College, added that television shows like "CSI" are shifting the interest from police careers to other criminal justice vocations.

Chelsey Dale Hull, 24, has denied allegations that he sewed his stepchildren's fingers together and said they must have watched him do it to himself and then sewed their own fingers together. In pleading not guilty to four counts of felony child abuse, he also said that the children lied about him burning their fingertips with a lighter and hitting their hands with a ruler. Hull's wife, Tanya, faces four counts of felony child neglect for not protecting her children.

The city of Milwaukee has launched a public-access cable television program that features mug shots and descriptions of the city's 10 most wanted criminals. Another show, which will publicize people convicted of prostitution or soliciting a prostitute, is expected to begin in a few weeks.

Violent crime in Milwaukee dropped by 25 percent in the first two months of this year, compared to the same period in 2002, and while Police Chief Arthur Jones attributed the decrease to the newly formed violent crime task force that patrols crime-ridden neighborhoods, he noted that the task force has gone over budget by an average of \$222,000 in each two-week pay period. Jones launched the task force in re-



sponse to a directive from the city's Fire and Police Commission to develop a plan to reduce violent crime. A spokesman for Mayor John Norquist said the decrease in crime was welcomed but that the 60-percent increase in overtime was not sustainable.

Fifty-seven cameras are part of the new technology that's been put in place at the Menomonee Falls Police Department to help capture and detain offenders. The city's revamped police facility, which has been expanded to 44,000 feet from its original 10,000, at a cost of about \$23.5 million, includes an access system that requires scanning photo identification cards. Certain rooms can only be accessed with five-digit personal identification numbers that are scrambled after a person passes through a door. In addition, offender fingerprints will be taken with laser and mug shots with digital cameras.

Milwaukee Police Chief Arthur Jones has asked the FBI to determine whether Officer Robert Henry violated a suspect's civil rights and used excessive force. Henry was seen on videotape roughing up a man in custody. Jones fired Henry last fall but he was reinstated by the Fire and Police Commission.



Plains States

**KANSAS** — Information collected on 1,450 foreign students at the University of Kansas as part of new homeland security measures was discovered to have been downloaded by a hacker. The university alerted the FBI and immigration officials.

**MINNESOTA** — The Minneapolis Police Department has renamed one of its sub-stations the Melissa Schmidt Public Housing Building in memory of the officer who was fatally wounded in a shootout last Aug. 1. Schmidt, 35, was shot in a bathroom of another public housing complex that she was patrolling. The resident who police say fired at Schmidt, 60-year-old Martha Donald, was also killed in the shootout.

Lawmakers who oppose the plan to lower the state's legal blood-alcohol limit may be forced to rethink their opposition because of the looming budget deficit. By agreeing to lower the threshold to 0.08 percent, the state would get as much as \$25 million a year for transportation projects from the federal government. County and city officials fear that lowering the limit would cost them more for prosecutions and inmate housing.

**MISSOURI** — The City Council in the St. Louis suburb of University City has adopted a resolution describing the new federal anti-terrorism laws as a threat to civil liberties, and a federal prosecutor fired back that the new resolution could hurt terrorists and jeopardize lives. The resolution directs city workers to refrain from taking part in any activities they feel may violate constitutional rights. Mayor Joseph Adams said that the law simply instructs the police not to break the law. About 30 towns and cities nationwide have passed similar resolutions.

**MONTANA** — Officials have announced the start of the state's Amber Alert system. In addition to alerting radio and television stations about abducted children, the system will also send alerts to state lottery terminals. Although there is no national system in place, the state will be able to cooperate with 37 other states using similar alerts.

Police are urging lawmakers to support legislation that would increase to 50 years the maximum prison sentence for anyone caught running a methamphetamine lab. The number of labs busted in the state jumped to 110 in 2001, up from 33 in 1999.

**NEBRASKA** — The Nebraska State Patrol is investigating the Feb. 18 explosion of a Pierce County sheriff's patrol car that sent some pieces of the car flying as far as 40 feet. Investigators believe a homemade device was used. A patrol bomb technician was called to assist in collecting evidence.

The abduction and murder of 15-year-old Heather Guerrero in Gering has raised questions about ambiguities in the policy that dictates the use of the state's Amber Alert. The system was not used in Guerrero's case because Gering officials did not believe the necessary criteria for using the system had been met. However, a spokesperson for the California-based foundation that developed the Amber Alert system thought the evidence was strong enough to support its use.

**NORTH DAKOTA** — Cass County records show that of the 400 children living in foster homes, 56 of them are there because of a meth problem in their own homes.

**SOUTH DAKOTA** — The state House of Representatives is considering a bill that would make the crime of bestiality punishable by up to two years in prison, and anyone previously convicted of a sex offense could get up to five years in prison. In addition, violators would have to register as sex offenders. Representative Tom Hennies, who sponsored the bill, said that the legislation would protect people as well as animals because people found guilty of bestiality often escalate into more serious crimes.



Southwest

**ARIZONA** — The city of Yuma purchased seven new Harley-Davidsons at a cost of \$144,000, to replace old motorcycles that will be put on the auction block. The officers will be keeping one part of the old bikes: the license plate frames that read "Smile, I could be behind you."

**COLORADO** — Larimer County commissioners have banned weapons in county offices, excluding law enforcement agencies. The sheriff had backed a plan to allow workers with concealed weapons permits to bring their guns to work, but many residents criticized the proposal.

Denver sheriff's deputies have asked to

replace their khaki-with-a-hint-of-rose uniform pants with blue trousers that would match their shirts, but the Denver police blocked the change because they believe the public might confuse officers and deputies. Deputies, who have been wearing the rose-tinged pants since the mid-1960s, say the blue pants are cheaper, wear better and look more professional. The deputies will vote on which of three new uniform styles they prefer and then present their choice to city manager of safety Tracy Howard. Sheriff's deputies are also pressing to have the city charter changed to give them broader powers to make arrests and write citations, but Howard is opposed to the idea.

Investigators believe that a police impersonator may be involved in the disappearance and presumed death of Lacy Miller, a University of Northern Colorado student. Police revealed the theory after arresting Jason Clausen, 22, in connection with the disappearance. Clausen was known to drive around in his white Ford Expedition with red and blue lights and "act like a cop." Detectives said they recovered some of Miller's belongings, but won't say why they believe she is dead. The search for her body continues.

State Representative Lauri Clapp had wanted to pass a law that would make it a felony to send pornography to a child or solicit sex from a person posing as a child on the Internet, but then she discovered that the new crimes would cost \$4.2 million over the next five years for new prisons. Instead, she amended the bill to allow people who find Internet pedophiles to sue them in civil court. Clapp said she hopes that the state's budget situation will improve so that the criminal version of the bill can also be enacted.

With the help of a \$70,000 grant, the Aurora Police Department has acquired 68 PepperBall guns, 10 tasers and 10 shotguns loaded with pellets and silica gel rounds. Fourteen officers are already using PepperBall guns and more will be equipped throughout the year as staff and new recruits get trained to use the nonlethal weapons.

**OKLAHOMA** — Timothy Michael Thornburg, 26, and Stacy Ann Price, 30, have pleaded guilty to charges that they tried to hire someone to kill Payne County sheriff's deputy Brooke Buchanan. When the judge asked Thornburg why he tried to solicit the murder, he said that Buchanan had threatened him and his family. Police found a sawed-off shotgun, drug paraphernalia and a Samurai sword during a search following the arrests.

Although a jury cleared Tulsa patrol officer Orlando Lacy last June of a sexual battery charge, he was fired Feb. 13 following an administrative investigation of two traffic stops. In one stop, which led to the sexual battery charge, a woman said that Lacy put his hands beneath her bra and felt her breasts after she pulled a small cellophane package of marijuana from her bra. In the other case, a woman said that Lacy asked her to raise her shirt and undo the top button of her pants so he could run his fingers along her waistband. She said that Lacy told her he was searching for drugs.

The Oklahoma City Downtown College

Consortium has partnered with the Redlands Community College to offer a two-year degree program in forensic computer science. The program, which has a long waiting list, includes classes such as Criminal Procedures for Computer Crime, and Forensic Computer Science and Internet Criminal Investigations.

**TEXAS** — For the next 10 years, Simon Cordova will be reminded of the San Antonio police sergeant he killed. Cordova pleaded guilty to intoxication manslaughter after he fell asleep at the wheel and crashed into the vehicle driven by off-duty Sgt. Paul Rangel Jr. A jury sentenced Cordova to 10 years probation, but the judge, who could not set aside the jury's decision, added a few conditions. He ordered Cordova to serve 180 days in jail, suspended his license for two years, and gave him 800 hours of community service at the local Mothers Against Drunk Driving office. In addition, he ordered Cordova to carry a photo of Rangel in his wallet for the next 10 years.



Far West

**CALIFORNIA** — In the usually tranquil Ventura County, where overall crime continues to fall, the first six weeks of the new year saw a spate of deadly violence that included 10 homicides — a number that is nearly half the total for 2002. The violence has forced local law enforcement agencies to move officers into crime suppression task forces and investigative units. Police chiefs in Oxnard and Santa Paula, where 6 of the 10 homicides took place, believe the killings were random acts of violence rather than evidence of increased gang activity, but they still plan to boost police presence in gang turf.

Inglewood police are still looking for a suspect in the murder of a woman whose body parts were dumped over a two-day period last July in alleys a few blocks apart. The victim's head, hands and knees are still missing, making it so far impossible to identify her. Police have contacted law enforcement agencies across the country to review missing person reports and other mutilation cases. The murder, while described by a homicide detective as "horrific," was largely ignored by the public because it occurred just a week after the nationwide broadcast of a videotape showing a 16-year-old being beaten by Inglewood officers.

Palo Alto High School resource officer Wayne Benitez is asking Safeway, one of the country's largest supermarket chains, to do something about cold medicines that contain dextromethorphan, or DXM. Benitez has embarked on a crusade to make the cough medicines less accessible to teens, after a series of incidents occurred in the high school, including an attempted suicide by a student who overdosed on Concedin. Another student suffered a mild heart attack after drinking too much Robitussin. Benitez, who has met with company officials, is hopeful that Safeway and other stores will do more to educate the public and put the products under lock and key.

With the aid of the new FBI fingerprint database, authorities have arrested 68-year-old Gerald Mason for the slaying of two officers in El Segundo in July 1957. The fingerprints, taken from a stolen car on the night of the killings, were put through the new database, which linked them to Mason. Mason, who was arrested at his home in Columbia, S.C., had been leading a "very well-adjusted, normal life" with his wife, who had no knowledge of his past.

Two white Inglewood police officers, Jeremy Morse and Brian Darvish, both of whom face charges in the videotaped beating of a black handcuffed 16-year-old, have sued the city on grounds of racial discrimination. The two officers claim that a black officer, Antoine Crook, was treated less harshly and only suspended for four days for his role in the incident last July. Morse, who was seen on the tape punching and choking the teen, was fired in October. Darvish is still on the job but says he has been "relegated to washing city cars."

**IDAHO** — The Idaho Department of Corrections has become the nation's 27th such state agency to launch the VINE system that keeps individuals informed about offenders in state prisons. The Victim Information and Notification Everyday system is a toll-free, 24 hour hotline that users can call to access custody, release, parole and probation information.

**NEVADA** — A package of six bills is under considerations by the State Assembly, including one that would require hotel-casinos to develop emergency evacuation plans in the event of a terrorist attack. The plans would be filed with police agencies. Another bill would make terrorism a capital offense.

Police and prosecutors throughout the state are urging legislators to oppose a proposal by Gov. Kenny Guinn that would eliminate half of the 80 staffers authorized for the Division of Investigations, the agency that helps nab illicit drug dealers and manufacturers. Winnemucca Police Chief Robert Davidson said that the state's help is vital in nabbing methamphetamine manufacturers and dealers and that without it, drug activity and crime rates will increase.

Following a Senate committee's rejection of a proposed bill that would have made racial profiling a misdemeanor, Senate Minority Leader Dina Titus has requested new legislation. Titus wants to continue collection of traffic and pedestrian stop data. A recent state report showed that state police stopped black motorists at a rate double their proportion of the population.

**WASHINGTON** — Seattle motorcycle police officers should not have to hear any more insults like "get a real bike," now that the department is switching to Harley-Davidson Road Kings with 1,450-cc engines. The Harleys will be leased, which will save the city an estimated \$40,000 a year. In the past, the city bought Kawasakis, which they used for about three years and then sold.

Nine out of 13 school districts in Snohomish County have been using trained canines to sniff out drugs in school hallways and parking lots. The small town of Mukilteo has contracted for 90 such inspections at its schools.



## Valor in Vegas

Acts of great heroism are performed every day by law enforcement officers, but the nation's leaders this month chose one to honor: a Las Vegas officer who took a shotgun blast to the forehead in the course of responding to a domestic dispute.

Las Vegas Officer **Keith Borders**, 36, was shot April 28, 2001, when he got between Donald Charles Mettinger and his girlfriend. With blood gushing from his forehead, Borders shielded the woman, and returned fire, killing Mettinger.

On Feb. 14, he became the first police officer to win the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor, accepting congratulations from Vice President **Dick Cheney** during a ceremony at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington, D.C.

"These are some of the finest, bravest, most admirable Americans, and we are very fortunate to have them in our midst," said Cheney.

The award was created in 2001 to honor public safety officers who act selflessly to save others. Nine firefighters, from Nebraska, New Jersey, Florida and New York, were also honored.

Borders, who still has four shotgun pellets in his head, has undergone eight surgeries to correct damage to his ribs and vertebrae. He is a past winner of a Fraternal Order of Police award, and one from the gun maker Beretta for his involvement in the 2001 incident.

"We're proud of Keith. He's a good investigator and an aggressive cop, and that's the kind of guy I like to work with," said fellow officer **Dennis Devitte**, who previously won the "Top Cop" award for risking his life to foil an armed robbery at a sports bar in 1999.

## Clark's mark

Having left his mark on the New York City Police Department as the commander of two tough precincts, **Kevin P. Clark** hopes to make his next mark in Baltimore as the Charm City's new police commissioner.

Clark, 47, picked up the department's reins on Feb. 3. He replaced **Edward T. Norris**, also an NYPD veteran, who was named superintendent of the Maryland State Police.

It was Clark's experience in drug enforcement that brought the relatively obscure commander to the attention of Baltimore Mayor **Martin O'Malley** and other city officials. Before being promoted six months ago to deputy chief of the NYPD's narcotics division, Clark served for two years as commander of the 44th Precinct in the Bronx. During his first year there, he brought crime down by 20 percent.

As commander of the 47th Precinct, also in the Bronx, from 1998 to 2000, Clark reduced overall crime by 13 percent his first year, and by 26 percent by the time he left. Although homicides climbed from nine in 1999 to 29 in 2000, Clark was able to bring that figure back down by targeting likely gunmen.



**Kevin P. Clark**  
*Knocking down barriers*

He was also well liked by the community and by his subordinates. Feeling that commanders had not paid enough attention to neighborhood concerns, he removed a gate at the precinct, and had a concrete wall knocked down to make more space at the station house for visitors. Even though it meant losing his private bathroom, Clark moved his office to a more public location.

"He's very focused," said Deputy Insp. **Timothy Pearson**, commander of the NYPD's 88th Precinct. "In New York, as long as you don't lose the three C's you'll be all right — cops, community and crime. He had all three. He left his mark."

Departments that curtail a city's drug trade will reduce homicides and violence, Clark contends. In Baltimore, if the drug dealers can be forced off of street corners and indoors, fewer people, including them, will get shot and killed, he told *The Baltimore Sun*.

"There are homicides you can prevent and those you can't," said the new commissioner. "If you get off the street, they don't get shot in craps games or going to buy drugs. You don't have that guy driving by with a beef with somebody and opening fire out a window."

Clark's father, **Melvin**, was himself an NYPD officer, who patrolled the streets of Harlem. Knowing the perils of the job, his father had hoped Clark would go into some other line of work, but Clark said he always wanted to join the force. After two years at Iona College in New Rochelle, he joined the NYPD in 1981. He returned to school while on the job to earn a bachelor's degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

When he was promoted to commander of the 47th Precinct, the assignment came with an additional burden of responsibility: The neighborhood was the one in which Clark had grown up. Many of his childhood friends had either joined the force or gone to prison. Said Clark, "Some are still there, I'm sure."

## Building on Hope

He has a master's degree in theology, but on a full-time basis, **J.R. Wilson Jr.** ministers to a much broader flock — the entire city of Hope, Ark.

Wilson took over as his hometown's new police chief in January after serving with the FBI. He sees police work as a "ministry of service," he told *The*

*Associated Press*. "I have always thought of police work as a ministry.... There are opportunities to serve the community, and to serve the person who you may have to arrest by protecting his rights and assuring due process."

After graduating from college, Wilson joined the Dallas Police Department. While on the job there, he attended the Southwest Baptist Theological seminary and earned his master's. Wilson has also served as a reserve deputy with the Hempstead County, Ark., Sheriff's Department.

Wilson said he had no plans of reorganizing the police department which, he said, has an adequate budget, qualified officers and up-to-date technology. He plans on using the Citizen's Advisory Committee as a means of communicating to residents what police are doing, and for receiving input on new policies.

"I've had a lot of compliments on our department from other people in law enforcement, about how cooperative our people are," Wilson told *The Associated Press*. "We intend to cooperate with all law enforcement agencies and pool our resources to get the job done."

Having worked with the sheriff's office in the past, Wilson said he is looking forward to collaborating with Sheriff **Jerry Crane** on various projects. "Sheriff Crane and I think a lot alike," he said.

## One last 'mush'

At the end of each episode of "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon," actor **Richard W. Simmons** would put his arm around his trusty Husky, and say, "It looks like this case is closed."

Sadly, Simmons closed his final case on Jan. 18 when he succumbed to Alzheimer's disease. He was 89 and had been living at a nursing home in Oceanside, Calif. As a movie and television actor, Simmons' Hollywood career spanned 40 years.

On the show, which aired on Saturday mornings from 1955 to 1958, Simmons played **Frank Preston**, a



**Sergeant Preston of the Yukon**

Northwest Mounted Police sergeant in the 1890s whose keen detective work, aided by his dog, **Yukon King**, and his horse, **Rex**, always led him to the bad guys first.

Simmons combined Clark Gable-like looks — square jaw, pencil-thin mustache and athletic build — with an authoritative voice and demeanor to fit comfortably into the role of the red-uniformed Canadian Mountie. He was discovered by Hollywood mogul **Louis B. Mayer** while working as a rodeo rider. On "Sergeant Preston," Simmons did all his own stunts, including skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, mushing and mountain-climbing.

## High on High

While he had his critics within the rank and file of the Norfolk, Va., Police Department, nobody could say that Chief **Melvin High** did not improve relations between the agency and the community during his tenure there. In Prince George's County, Md., where



**Melvin High**  
*Back to the Beltway*

High was chosen this month to head the jurisdiction's troubled department, officials are hoping for the same transformation.

If confirmed by the County Council, the 58-year-old High will replace Chief **Gerald Wilson** within the next two months. A veteran officer who began his career in 1969 with the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., then went on to lead the Norfolk force for a decade, High was picked by County Executive **Jack B. Johnson** and his consultant, long-time police executive **Patrick V. Murphy**.

Murphy said High, a proponent of community policing, stressed "people's policing," in their many conversations.

"In the United States, we're changing to community policing but we have not advanced it to the level and the concept that Chief High has," Murphy said, "and the level it ultimately can become: The policing of the people by themselves. And I believe this fine department that has some problems is blessed to have the leadership of Chief High."

Among the problems Murphy alluded to is a reputation for brutality that finally prompted a federal investigation in 2000. Last February, Chief **John S. Farrell** abruptly ended a six-year tenure. While he received kudos for streamlining the department, the agency was still dogged by allegations of discrimination.

At the time, the county trailed only Baltimore city for the highest annual homicide rate in the state. And a Washington Post analysis also found that Prince George's officers killed more people per officer between 1990 and 2000 than the 50 largest police agencies in the country. Of the 122 who were shot, 47 were killed. Nearly half of those shot were unarmed.

Following Farrell's resignation, the county replaced him with Wilson, who was then a lieutenant colonel heading the patrol division. Although Wilson had initially stated that he would consider staying with the department after High takes command, the acting chief said this month that he would cut his ties to the agency.

"I don't have anything to hang my head about," he said. "I've done the best

that I can do for the community as well as the officers. I think history will tell whether we have gotten on the right track. I think we are moving in the right direction, and I wish my successor my best, and I certainly respect the county executive's position."

Wilson was the county's first black chief.

At the time of his retirement from the D.C. police in 1992, High held the No. 2 position in the department. In Norfolk, his dedication to relationship-building with the community was applauded by civic groups, but did not go over as well with his troops.

"Community policing stresses more problem-solving — it takes a lot of emphasis away from making arrests," said **Harry Twiford**, president of the city's Fraternal Order of Police. "We're not social workers, we're not psychologists. We're cops. We're asked to do more than policemen. Most of these guys didn't sign up to be social workers."

High's handling of the death three years ago of a black man, **Raymond C. Chandler**, impressed municipal officials and the community, however. Chandler was pepper sprayed and forced to the ground by three officers. Although the officers were cleared, High's refusal to side with either his officers or the community until the investigation was complete angered police who did not feel backed by their chief.

## Back to work

**Joseph Santiago**, who last year served for seven months as head of the New Jersey State Police, in a tenure marked by controversy from rocky start to abrupt finish, has been hired by Trenton officials as the state capital's police director. But as in the past, the confirmation this month did not come without a fight.

His appointment by Mayor **Douglas Palmer** was approved by a 5-to-2 City Council vote. During a contentious hearing, **Len Cipriano**, president of Local 11 of the Policemen's Benevolent Association, called Santiago "unworthy" and questioned his leadership ability. He is someone, said Cipriano, whom rank-and-file officers could have trouble supporting due to his controversial past.

Santiago, who has also been police director of Newark, was reprimanded twice by the attorney general during his brief tenure as state police superintendent. One of those reprimands, according to *The Associated Press*, was for signing papers that gave the impression he had graduated from a special police academy class. It allowed Santiago, who had never been a trooper, to wear the state police uniform and badge.

During his career, Santiago has also been convicted of hitting a correction officer and of verbally abusing another member of the Newark force.

His undoing as superintendent of the state police, however, was the allegations that he had links to a reputed organized crime figure. The allegations were later deemed unfounded by the attorney general's office.

"I had to go through this although I've answered most of the questions before," said Santiago. "I never said that I was perfect, but I bring a lot to the table. It's just time to get to work now."



# LAPD looks to put gusto back in gang enforcement

Experts say a crackdown on gangs in Los Angeles may be hindered because spotty record-keeping on any gang-related offense besides murder has left law enforcement with an incomplete picture of the problem.

Police Chief William Bratton last month named Deputy Chief Mike Hillman to the post of citywide gang czar. As part of his strategy, Hillman said he would use task forces that paired citizen watchdog groups with local, state and federal law enforcement officers.

A key component of the plan will be the use of Gang Impact Teams, or GITs, that will bring together LAPD officers from various units and officials from other agencies. They will work out of each of the city's 18 police stations. Community Impact Action Teams of citizens and clergy will help guide officers, according to Hillman.

Since the Rampart Division scandal of 1999, in which rogue officers working in anti-gang units planted evidence and shot suspects, the department has not made gang suppression a priority. Four years ago, when the anti-gang units were disbanded, the city had 136 gang-related murders. By last year, that figure had risen to 334 — more than half of all homicides in Los Angeles. In the Valley, gang-related killings jumped by 34 percent, from 47 in 2001 to 63 in 2002.

Another factor, according to sources who spoke anonymously to The (Los Angeles) Daily News, was the strict disciplinary system imposed on the

force by former Chief Bernard C. Parks.

"[Officers] would get in trouble for the smallest things, and gang members realized all they'd have to do is start making complaints and police wouldn't be as proactive," said one detective. "It took a lot of gusto out of the gang units."

Hillman said that he would be asking Bratton to extend the length of time officers can spend in specialized units from just three years to five years.

"Some of the SEU officers who are just coming up on two and a half years have just started to develop some degree of expertise in the area of being able to understand gangs because there was a quite a stutter step...when CRASH [anti-gang teams] went away," he told The Daily News.

The Special Enforcement Unit was created to replace the controversial CRASH units, which were disbanded in the wake of the Rampart scandal.

But while gang-related homicides have soared, statistics show that overall gang crime has fallen nationwide. In Los Angeles, gang crime increased only marginally last year, and is up by less than 20 percent since 1999.

This is not because it does not exist, claim experts, but because little data is collected about the broad range of gang-influenced crime. With no means of accurately tracking it, law enforcement is flying blind.

"What are the dimensions of the problem? Are they smaller or greater than people think?" John Moore, director of the Florida-based National Youth

Gang Center, pondered in an interview with The Los Angeles Times. "I get calls all the time asking me for comparative information, and we have no way of doing that because we have no standardized system, and police department aren't required to keep track of it."

Police officials agree that not enough data is kept.

Although legislation called the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Protection Act of 1988, which provides longer prison sentences for gang members, had a provision which required law enforcement to collect data, there was no mechanism for doing so, said Mayor James K. Hahn, who as city attorney helped draft the legislation.

As a result, only gang-related homicides have been tracked over the past 15 years, and even those figures are suspect.

In 2001, the state counted 647 such murders out of a total of 2,200 statewide. Yet the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department recorded 587

within its jurisdiction alone.

The LAPD relies largely on "guesstimates," conceded Assistant Chief Jim McDonnell. While an informal tally of gang-related homicides, assaults and other violent crime has been kept for more than 30 years, the police department has never tracked the connection between gangs and narcotics, he told The Times.

"[The LAPD] didn't recognize gang-related crime might be worse than they were counting," said Hahn, who has been frustrated by the lack of data. "It spreads into narcotics. It spreads into domestic violence. I think there was a failure to recognize that gangs were involved in a lot of crimes in the neighborhood beyond drive-by shootings and homicides."

There is even disagreement over what constitutes a gang crime. Under standards followed by Chicago police, who are battling a gang problem of their own, it is any offense committed to further the interests of the gang, or when a

gang's resources are used to intimidate a victim or witness.

Civil libertarians in Southern California, however, worry that the LAPD uses too broad a definition to categorize gang members. There are presently 100,000 names on the county's gang list, including 52,000 in Los Angeles.

The STEP Act may tempt law enforcement officers into labeling young men from tough neighborhoods as gangsters, critics say. Police should differentiate between hard-core gang members and those on the fringes of the group, said Elizabeth Schroeder, associate director of the ACLU of Southern California, and Greg Boyle, a Jesuit priest who works with gang members.

Moreover, they say, some gang members commit crimes that have more to do with personal situations, such as family strife and addiction.

But Hahn finds that argument specious. Anyone belonging to a gang, he told The Times, is a member of an enterprise dedicated to breaking the law

## Hopes are high as Portland rolls out quality-of-life cops

As part of a department-wide expansion of the Portland, Ore., Police Bureau's community policing effort, officers from each of the city's precincts will be charged solely with fighting livability problems within their own jurisdictions.

Deployment of the initiative this month has not run smoothly, however. Police Chief Mark Kroeker has been challenged as to why only one of his 23 "Senior Neighborhood Officers" was not a white male, and only a handful of the officers, who are the linchpins of the program, agreed to have their pictures posted on the department's Web site and displayed by the media.

Those who refused charged that having their faces made public would hinder their undercover work and place them in unnecessary danger.

"This is all very new to them," said Kroeker. "As they grow into the role, I

expect they'll become more and more relaxed."

It was the nature of "the officers' heart" rather than the "color of his or her skin" that would make the program effective, Kroeker added. None of the agency's African American, Latino or Asian American officers, who make up 10 percent of the 975-member force, was interested in a tour of duty with the quality-of-life initiative, he said.

"This is a concern of mine," he told The Oregonian. "I fully expect in the future that the group will look different."

While some members of the rank and file have complained about pulling as many as six officers away from answering calls to focusing on quality-of-life crimes, the city's police union told The Oregonian that Kroeker's plan was a good distribution of resources.

For example, car prowls in the

Goose Hollow neighborhood have been reduced by 50 percent because of the inundation of theft-prevention messages ordered by Officer Jeff Myers, one of the original five SNOs. Another officer, Steve Andrusko, has closed eight drug houses in Southwest Portland during the past year. Shoplifting and burglary rings have also been smashed.

"They should be worth their weight in gold," said Kroeker.



### Bye, daddy

One of numerous law enforcement officers nationwide who serve in two different uniforms, Los Angeles police Sgt. Ryan White says goodbye to his 2-year-old daughter Savannah on Feb. 19 before his Marine reserve unit, the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, was deployed to the Middle East from Camp Pendleton, Calif. (Reuters)

## Foundation fuels E-911 systems

Grants that range in size from little more than \$9,000 to \$500,000 will be awarded to jurisdictions by a private foundation for the implementation of enhanced emergency call systems.

A total of \$2.4 million will be dispersed to 29 grantees in 20 states by the Public Safety Foundation of America, a nonprofit organization established last year by the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO).

"Given the tremendous budget constraints currently faced by our nation's governors, these grants from the PSFA will provide critical funding to make E-911 a reality in even the smallest communities," said Thom Rubel, director of state information technology programs for the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. "Not only will we have a stronger system of public safety but our nation's families will have a greater peace of mind."

Donations from corporations,

APCO chapters and the Wireless E-911 PSAP Readiness Fund, a group organized by Nextel Communications, will provide funding for the grants, according to the foundation.

Wireless carriers, said the PSFA, are working to comply with a 2005 deadline imposed by the Federal Communications Commission for the implementation of E-911. The technology enables emergency calls made from mobile phones to be geographically located.

Among the recipients will be Elmore County, Ala., which will receive the smallest amount, \$9,465, and the Anchorage Police Department, which will be getting \$500,000. Other jurisdictions include Laramie and Sheridan, Wyo., which will receive \$55,000 and \$113,000, respectively; Philadelphia, which will get \$40,000, and the District of Columbia, which will get two \$150,000 grants, one each for the International City/County Management Association and Public Technology Inc.

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## FY 2004 budget seen as mixed bag

On top of budget cuts likely to devastate local law enforcement agencies that depend on federal dollars in the forms of grants, critics of the Bush administration's proposed \$2.23-trillion budget for FY 2004 contend that the government is still shortchanging the nation on homeland security.

Among the programs on the chopping block is the \$400-million Edward Byrne Memorial Law Enforcement Grant Program, an initiative launched by the first President Bush in 1988. Under the new proposal, it would be combined at half the cost with two other law enforcement initiatives to form the Justice Assistance Grant program.

In New York City, the loss of the Byrne grants and other programs would mean a \$50-million blow to police, and a \$30-million loss for the city's Department of Correction.

"It's not written in stone that it's [the Byrne fund] going to be cut, and we're hoping that it's not cut, obviously, because we use that fund for youth programs, narcotics suppression and counterterrorism funding," said Capt. James Klein, an NYPD spokesman.

Under the Bush administration's proposal, the Justice Department would receive \$23.3 billion, including \$600 million in additional funding for anti-terrorism programs. The total would also include \$326 million for more prison beds and correctional programs, and about \$200 million for DNA analysis and anti-drug initiatives.

Although the FBI has come under fire this year, the bureau will receive an additional \$441 million — a 10.2-percent leap over Bush's 2003 budget request — for a total of \$4.6 billion. The funds would be used to hire more agents and counterterrorism analysts, and expand programs to combat cyber-crime by terrorists. The bureau will also receive \$82 million to upgrade its technology [see related story, this page].

Overall, the Justice Department would cut \$140 million for juvenile-justice programs, and roughly \$200 million in justice assistance grants. No new funding would be provided under the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The popular Clinton-era anticrime initiative, which received \$737 million last year, would only receive \$164 million under the proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins in October.

A spokesman for the Office of Management and Budget, Trent Duffy, maintained that new funding for first-responders would raise the level of aid to all local police agencies.

Roughly \$3.5 billion has been designated for municipal law enforcement, emergency medical personnel and firefighters. The figure is the same as it was in 2003, but even last year's appropriation has yet to make its way into local hands due to budget impasses.

"While we are pleased that the budget proposes a second installment of \$3.5 billion for local homeland security investments, cities continue to wait for the first round of this funding, which was promised more than a year ago," said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the president of the U.S. Conference of

Mayors.

Bush's budget proposal calls for spending \$36.2 billion for the 22 agencies that are coming together under the new Department of Homeland Security — a 7.4-percent increase over last year. Another \$26.7 billion is included in the proposal as discretionary spending.

The largest portion of that, \$18.1 billion, would be allocated for transportation and border security, including new inspection technology and training dogs to detect weapons of mass destruction. It would also pay for an entry-exit system to document visitors as they enter and leave the country.

Some \$6.7 billion would go to the Coast Guard for six new anti-terrorist teams, new boats and the upgrade of its cutters. And the department's emergency preparedness and response unit would receive a 15-percent increase over last year, or nearly \$6 billion for vaccines and medicines in case of bioterrorism.

Democrats have attacked the proposal as being inadequate. New York Senator Charles E. Schumer told The New York Times that it reflected the "quirky notion of the White House that you can improve homeland security without spending the dollars. It makes no sense."

In a study released by the Brookings Institution in January, a panel that included former members of the Clinton administration recommended spending \$45 billion next year on homeland security — \$4 billion more than in the proposed budget.

After factoring in inflation, Schumer said that spending on increased protection at the border would only increase by 1 percent, or \$52 million.

"This White House will spend almost anything we need to support a war on terrorism overseas, but they will actually spend fewer dollars than last year on homeland security," he said.

## IG's audit blasts FBI computer 'upgrade'

An FBI computer project called Trilogy, which was jump-started after Sept. 11 to upgrade the bureau's antiquated technology, has become a "large disaster," according to federal lawmakers.

A report in January by Glenn A. Fine, the Justice Department's Inspector General, said that not only had the project's start-up been poorly planned, but the FBI's system was in worse shape than was previously believed. Hundreds of desktop computers that were ordered for field offices, for instance, were held up because they lacked enough fiber-optic cable to replace crumbling lines. An automated case-support system available over the Internet was scrapped after it was considered to be unworkable.

Moreover, the FBI missed a self-imposed 2002 deadline for installing hardware and other gear, even after additional money was allocated by Congress. And now doubts are being raised as to whether the bureau will meet a June 2004 target date for installation of the user-application software. Funding problems, said the IG's report, could push that date back further.

"The Trilogy project provides an example of how the non-

implementation of fundamental [information technology] investment management practices can put a project at risk of not delivering what was promised, within cost and schedule requirements," the report concluded.

A recent FBI report projected that Trilogy's \$458-million price tag would increase by 30 percent. The increase, according to a Los Angeles Times source familiar with the initiative, is needed to ensure system security and to enhance record management and information sharing.

"Unfortunately, Trilogy has become a large disaster," said Senator Judd Gregg, a New Hampshire Republican and chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that oversees the FBI budget.

In a debate over homeland security, Gregg said: "FBI software and hardware contracts for Trilogy have essentially become gold-plated. The cost is soaring. The schedule is out of control."

Some \$100 million was eliminated from a Senate spending bill adopted by Congress in January which would have funded other related bureau projects, including data-mining tools, digital storage of millions of documents concerning counterterrorism investigations and a cyber-crime SWAT team.

## Sifting real from virtual kiddie-porn victims

In the wake of a Supreme Court decision requiring that child pornography contain images of actual children, and not those created by computer, a federal database has been developed that will help investigators to identify the victims as real.

Last April, the Court struck down a 1996 law that prohibited "virtual" child pornography. Writing for the 6-3 majority, Justice Anthony Kennedy said that the statute threatened to ban material as mainstream as "Romeo and Juliet" with its underage lovers. The First Amendment, he said, required a more precise restriction.

The national database, which began processing photographs on Jan. 24, will be similar to those maintained by Interpol in Britain, Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands, which hold millions of images of sexually abused and exploited children from countries around the world.

The database will use image-comparison software to match photographs. While child pornography is often of prepubescents between the ages 6 and 11, the catalog will also hold photographs of toddlers and infants. These images include nude shots as well as those of rape and sadistic abuse. Unlike databases that track criminals and suspects, the names of victims will not be listed in the kiddie porn database. Instead, it will hold the names of law enforcement officers who could testify that the child exists.

"The kid is out there and was victimized at one time," said Michael Netherland, the director of the child exploitation unit at the United States Customs Service. The database is being maintained by the Customs Cybersmuggling Unit and is a cooperative effort between government agencies and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Last year, Netherland oversaw Operation Hamlet, a global investigation of child pornography that resulted in 30 arrests, 18 in the United States. Most were of fathers who were sexually abusing their daughters.

Operation Hamlet was sparked by Danish child pornography investigator with the country's national police force, who was able to use a partial shirt logo to identify a Danish man and woman who were abusing their daughter.

The probe eventually led to Clovis, Calif., where police arrested a 45-year-old chiropractor with some half a million photos and films on his computer, and 400 CDs. Lloyd A. Emerson, who is accused by prosecutors of being the hub of several child pornography trading networks, has pleaded not guilty to federal charges of manufacturing and distributing child pornography.

"A lot of people say, 'I was just trading pictures,'" Lars Underbjerg, the Danish investigator, told The New York Times. "We say, 'No, you weren't. They were child abuse images.'"

Clovis police investigators were able to track the abusers of 70 children using such basic Internet tools as Google, Mapquest and on-line phone directories. Many of the photos, which showed children at home with their abusers, gave police clues to work with, such as street signs, blurred license plates and company directories in the backgrounds.

"Human interest hasn't changed, technology has," said Officer James Gentry, one of the investigators who sifted through Emerson's porn archive.

All of those indicted in Operation Hamlet had digital cameras that allow abusers to take photos without having to have them developed, said authorities. With high-speed Internet connections, vast trading networks have been developed.

"What we are trying to do is stop the actual abuse," said Underbjerg. "If there isn't abuse, there aren't any child abuse images."

## Speeders take an alternate route

Drivers and police officials are at odds in Summersville, W. Va., over the significance of a Web site that allows those caught speeding to pay \$20 plus a hefty fine and be on their way after passing an easy, Internet-based exam.

While the strategy does offer drivers a way to avoid notifying and involving their insurance companies and state licensing agencies, some drivers also insist it points to the militancy of the city in collecting fees.

After receiving a ticket, speeders can pay their tickets by Visa or Mastercard, and take a 25-question driving safety exam. While the exam is not a "gimme test," said Officer Jay Nowak, neither is it particularly difficult.

A passing grade is 70 percent, and "nobody ever fails," said Ron Sweeney, who administers the Web site.

Summersville, a town of 3,294 residents, is on the route to the New River Gorge, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the state. U.S. 19, a four-lane highway, cuts through it to allow mo-

## Bypassing the state and insurance companies on the information superhighway.

torists to bypass Charleston. Once drivers hit the town limits, however, the speed limit abruptly drops from 65 mph to 50 mph.

"People speed on this highway," said Mayor Stan Adkins. "They come on this highway and think it's an interstate. Fifty is the maximum speed, fellows. They've been traveling 65 since Buffalo, New York."

With fines ranging from \$147 to \$162, speeders pumped an estimated \$1 million in fees and fines into the town's coffers last year. The city's 19 police officers handed out 10,775 traffic tickets in 2002 — 9,150 of them for speeding.

Town officials contend that the crack-down saves lives. On any given day, 25,000 cars pass through Summersville. The ma-

jority, 17,000, are out-of-towners. In 2002, the town had one traffic-related death.

"No person, to my knowledge, has ever gotten a ticket in Summersville unless they were substantially exceeding the maximum posted speed limit," Adkins told The Charleston Gazette-Mail.

But motorists claim that is simply not true. Mike Mullen, a resident of Hillard, Ohio, said he received a \$117 ticket in 1999 for going 61 mph in a 50 mph zone. He was so angry he created a Web site that warns users that Summersville is the nation's "No. 2 speed trap."

Other critics charge that the collection of credit card payments threatens the integrity of safety exams.

"That kind of system can be abused," said Jack Boone, a municipal judge in Gassaway and Burnsville, who operates a traffic school for first-time offenders. "When you lose that personal appearance before me — well, I don't think our founders intended it that way. If this system becomes a money machine, I can't be here."



# Audit rips DNA work by Houston PD

The Houston Police Department and Harris County prosecutors have so far identified 90 cases as needing further forensic review, after a scathing audit ordered by the state last year led to the suspension of genetic testing by the HPD's laboratory, and the likely suspicion that at least some of those imprisoned on the basis of DNA evidence got a raw deal.

The result of the audit, conducted by the state Department of Public Safety and technicians from the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office, was damning. According to its findings, technicians were ill-trained and kept shoddy records. While a quality manual existed, the processes detailed in the document were not conducted, said the report.

In addition, the audit noted, "budgeting concerns prevented the calibration of equipment," and "transcripts were not available for all the staff" in the DNA section to "verify that examiners have met the educational requirements." It could not be determined whether two of the technicians had studied biochemistry, genetics or molecular biology as part of their college course work, or whether another two had ever earned bachelor's degrees.

Procedures as straightforward as those for taking and maintaining case notes were not implemented, according to the report. "Screening notes do not include a description of the item, what probative stains were identified, how the stained were identified, and what stains were collected," the report stated.

While internal audits were conducted in 2000 and 2001, no external audits were done as required, the report noted. The 2001 audit was not signed, and neither was completely filled out. "The lab did not show evidence of adequate response to their findings of previous audits," said the report.

To top it all off, the roof leaked. The physical deterioration of the facility, said auditors, led to the contamination of samples.

Jennifer LaCross, a former criminalist and DNA analyst, noted in the letter of resignation she submitted last May: "[The] leaking of water has forced the employees on the 26th floor [of HPD headquarters] to work in hazardous conditions. These hazardous conditions include uncontaminable puddles of water, water leaking on to electrical wiring and lighting, and water leaking onto biological materials such as blood-soaked items. This water containment problem has at times, in my opinion, compromised the integrity of biological evidence stored in our facility."

William C. Thompson, a professor of criminology at the University of California at Irvine, examined eight DNA cases last fall at the request of investigative reporters from KHOU-TV in Houston.

"I thought the work was atrocious," he told Law Enforcement News. "Not only did it look as if they were not following what are generally considered good practices, but they were routinely reporting incorrect and misleading statistics. In at least in two of the cases I looked at, it looked like the conclusions in their report were not supported by the underlying test results. They would say sample A matched sample B, and I would look, and sample A would not match sample B. It was blatant, just blatant errors."

Following the audit, which was

completed in December, acting Chief Tim Oettmeier suspended testing at the lab. Instead, the department has contracted with Identigene, a private firm that was accredited last April by the National Forensic Science Technology Center, one of two organizations in the nation which can certify that a DNA lab adheres to standards set by the FBI.

The police department is paying Identigene nearly \$20,000 to conduct

A lab facility where water from a roof leak dripped onto electrical wiring and contaminated biological samples.

its DNA tests. While 90 cases are currently due for review, there could ultimately be as many as 400 that will need to be re-examined. Identigene, which has primarily conducted paternity testing, would receive the bulk of the work.

While problems have cropped up at labs in other jurisdictions, including ones in Oklahoma City, Montana and Washington State, any inaccuracy at the HPD's lab is said to be particularly troubling because Harris County, which includes Houston, leads the nation in executions.

A longstanding concern of many forensic experts is that labs tend to lean on the side of law enforcement, instead of being neutral fact-finders.

"In the cases I looked at, it looked as if it was all slanted in the direction of incriminating or further incriminating the suspects in the case," said Thompson. "I was quite alarmed by this, and I said publicly that I thought this was bad work and that there were problems. The worst one I looked at was this one called the Josiah Sutton case where I thought the results, correctly interpreted, tended to exonerate Sutton. But the lab had presented it as it was just an absolute identification."

Sutton was convicted of rape in 1999 and sentenced to 25 years.

# NYPD gets a freer hand in intelligence-gathering

The New York City Police Department's adoption of surveillance guidelines issued last year by Attorney General John Ashcroft has convinced a federal district judge to modify a long-standing court order that had restricted the department's ability to gather intelligence on political groups.

Judge Charles S. Haight Jr. handed down his ruling on Feb. 12, saying that he had been convinced by an affidavit submitted in January by David Cohen, the NYPD's deputy commissioner for intelligence. Cohen, a former CIA official, said that he believed the force could investigate terrorism under Ashcroft's guidelines. Cohen also laid out for Haight the "changed circumstances" that warranted the modification. Islamic institutes and mosques in the United States, he wrote, had become increasingly radicalized, yet they hid behind the First Amendment, beyond the reach of law enforcement.

Haight did, however, leave in place a three-member oversight board that can investigate complaints made by people who contend their rights are being violated by police scrutiny into their political activities. The panel, composed of two senior police officials and a civilian appointed by the mayor, would deter illegal misconduct by law enforcement, the judge said.

"The Constitution's protections are unchanging," Haight wrote, "but the nature of public peril can change with dramatic speed, a recent events show." The guidelines under the original 1985 consent decree, called the Handschu agreement after the plaintiff in a 1971 lawsuit, "addressed different perils in a different time."

Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, who along with other city officials praised the ruling, echoed Haight's remarks.

"We live in a different, more dangerous time than when the consent decree was approved in 1985," he told The New York Times. "This ruling removes restrictions from a bygone era, and will allow us to more effectively carry out counterterrorism investigations."

As the ruling was handed down, the city was responding to the orange alert



NYPD Emergency Service officers stand guard near a military recruiting station in Times Square, as the city remains on a heightened level of terror alert.

(Reuters)

issued by the federal Department of Homeland Security earlier in the week. Police officials focused much of their attention on New York's subway system after investigators were able to glean the word "underground" from communications intercepted from suspected terrorists.

The NYPD sent out nearly a dozen teams of officers to test the air below ground for chemical, biological or radiological agents. Drew Bailey, a police union official, told The Daily News, however, that the department did not issue any masks or other protective gear.

"If these cops go down, how are they going to help anybody?" he asked. In January, the department said it would spend \$25 million it had received from a Justice Department grant for the purchase of 40,000 special suits to protect officers from chemical weapons.

Some 4,600 of them were to be distributed this month, with the first going to the 2,100 recruits who graduated from the police academy on Jan. 21. An additional 2,500 will be given to officers who received specialized training for the gear, a police official told The New York Times.

Kelly would not elaborate on what type of agents the suits would protect against, or the names of the vendors from which they were bought, citing concerns that terrorists could take advantage of the information. But a department spokesperson said the suits are similar to those used by military forces around the world.

In addition to the suits, officers will receive kits containing protective footwear, cleaning agents for the eyes and skin, a respirator and latex gloves.

Kelly acknowledged that only about half of the force's 28,000 patrol officers had as yet received any terrorism training, but the NYPD's elite units, he said, were among the best trained in the world.

Among the measures taken by the department has been the increased use of its "Hercules teams," units of heavily armed, specially trained officers. In recent months, the units, often accompanied by dogs, have visited landmarks and other possible targets. Large numbers of officers, officials said, would sweep through the subway system, checking token booth areas and walking through the trains, car by car.

# Persistent violence has Baltimore ready to bite the bullet on calling in troopers

While fears of racial profiling have stymied past attempts by Maryland lawmakers to expand the jurisdiction of state troopers into the city of Baltimore, the persistence of drug-related crime and violence there has changed enough minds so that an agreement allowing city and state authorities to work together may become a reality sooner rather than later.

"We're anxious to get any help we can get from the state," said Mayor Martin O'Malley, adding that he would like to get troopers into the city as "soon as possible."

The debate over whether to allow state police to conduct operations in Baltimore has raged for a decade. Troopers have not been deployed within city limits since 1994 when then-Gov. William Donald Schaefer ordered a state police raid targeting prostitution and drug sales. Although dozens of ar-

rests were made, allegations were raised that during the investigation, two troopers had sex with a prostitute, and a third shared his hotel room with the potential subject of an investigation.

Also opposed to troopers in Baltimore was the NAACP, which accused the state police of targeting minorities along Interstate 95.

Delegate Tony E. Fulton, a Baltimore Democrat who introduced legislation in February that would require troopers to lead homicide investigations in jurisdictions with more than 50 homicides a year, said he had not supported state police intervention in the past for that reason.

"For six years I was opposed to it," he told The (Baltimore) Sun in a Jan. 30 interview. "I was adamantly against the state police coming into the city. I just lost faith in the city police department. I just have the confidence that

state police have better training, better skills to deal with these crimes."

State police estimate that it would cost \$20 million annually to provide the extra services called for in Fulton's bill.

Maryland law allows troopers and municipal police to work together as long as there is a memorandum of understanding — something that both agencies are currently drafting, according to O'Malley. Troopers are prohibited from making traffic stops in Baltimore, but that too is up for discussion.

O'Malley sought greater cooperation from the state when Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. tapped the city's police commissioner, Edward I. Norris, to head the state police in December. According to Norris, O'Malley asked him to provide some support for the city, and Ehrlich asked that the state agency "help Baltimore City out," he said.

Succeeding Norris as commissioner

will be Kevin P. Clark, a fellow New York City Police Department veteran. [See story, Page 4.] Norris said he and Clark are good friends and will work well together. The state police, he said, will give as much help as it can.

"The real issue here is how you can increase your law enforcement presence," said Ehrlich. "Whatever needs to be resolved for the two agencies to operate together, 'we'll get it done'."

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# Sex offenders fall through the cracks

Continued from Page 1

4,000 offenders in New York City alone, and 11,000 in the state ... There is really no adequate way to implement legislation where you can constantly check up and see they are living where they say they are."

A key finding of the parents' group's study was that compliance had little to do with the number of sex offenders living in a given state. For example, Florida, which has approximately 27,000, has the lowest rate of non-compliance, at 4.7 percent. By contrast, Tennessee, which has about 6,300 offenders, reported a non-compliance rate of 50 percent. It was tied for last place with Oklahoma, which mails address verification forms annually to 5,415 offenders.

Ahearn said the group has since put together and distributed a follow-up survey aimed at finding out what factors may contribute to the low failure rates in some states.

Florida has a three-fold advantage, according to Mary Coffee, senior management analyst supervisor for the sexual offender/predator unit of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The FDLE, which administers the registry at its Tallahassee headquarters, has the technological capability to communicate with other state agencies and local law enforcement. It has a good working relationship with these organizations. And Florida lawmakers, along with the Governor's Office, are fully supportive of Megan's Law, giving law enforcement whatever it needs to implement the statute.

Many police and sheriff's departments across the state have dedicated

## Access denied

While more streamlined access to sex offender databases has been a goal in some jurisdictions, in others, greater restrictions have been imposed.

New rules took effect on Jan. 30 that will limit access to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's sex registry to those who reside in a law enforcement agency's jurisdiction or a neighboring area who can show proof of residency. Others living outside the boundaries would have to show a specific threat or the need for protection. The Associated Press reported in January.

The guidelines were written by a governor's task force and the state Department of Public Safety. Some 7,600 sex offenders are on the CBI's list, with pictures and personal infor-

mation on the 166 most serious. It also lists the names of the 175 who failed to register.

A proposal to allow others, including the news media, to get the entire list, was rejected by the panel.

Some state lawmakers and district attorneys are troubled by the restrictions. Senator Norma Anderson, a Littleton Republican, told The AP, "This is not what we intended."

The rules could keep information from people who need to have access, such as the managers of day-care centers.

Said Peter Weir, director of the Colorado District Attorneys Council: "The spirit and intent was for the public to be informed of the presence of potential predators in their community."

officers or whole units doing nothing but keeping track of sex offenders, Coffee told LHN. With just enough resources, they have been able to make it a priority, she said. That, combined with the FDLE's technology, makes it easier for local police to report their findings to the state registry.

Both the Florida Department of Corrections and the state Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles submit information and update it directly to the registry on a daily basis. The electronic files are sent to Coffee's unit, and from there, it is updated on both the Internet and the agency's

closed-circuit Intranet network. That network gives local law enforcement direct access to the database.

"They can shoot us information immediately, just add it to the record so that we know and they know what the latest and greatest information is on sex offenders we're actively looking for," Coffee said.

But political will is also critical for making the system work, she said, noting that Florida was registering predators even before Megan's Law went into effect at the federal level.

"There's never been any opposition to making this law so that it works better, and making sure it accommodated whatever the needs were," said Coffee.

Other jurisdictions, including ones as disparate as New York City and Douglas County, Neb., have taken steps recently to ensure that a closer eye is kept on the convicted sexual predators living in their midst.

In New York last month, Mayor Michael Bloomberg unveiled a program called the Specifically Targeted Offend-

ers Project, or STOP, which will use the coordinated efforts of various criminal justice agencies to enforce stronger supervision of the 700 to 900 felons designated by a state panel as Level Three offenders.

According to Terry, New York is one of the very few jurisdictions increasing the level of supervision on high-risk offenders.

"[They are] hoping that after a while, sex offenders will realize that someone is checking up on them, whereas now," the criminologist said, "most know no one is going to be checking up on them."

Out of the 3,972 registered sex offenders in New York City, Level Three offenders are considered to be those most likely to commit another offense. The program would be limited to those who assaulted strangers, attacked more than one victim, killed or seriously injured their victim, or attacked children, the elderly or the mentally or physically disabled.

It would coordinate the efforts of the city's five district attorneys, its police department, criminal courts and probation department, along with the state's Division of Criminal Justice Services and parole officers. Those who are still on parole, an estimated 130 in the city, would be required to meet with parole officers at least six times a month instead of four. Those on probation would have to see their probation officers four times a month under STOP, with at least one home visit. Curfews could be set and enforced in those cases where officers feel it is warranted.

Approximately 50 assistant district attorneys would be added and trained to handle registration violations, said John Feinblatt, the mayor's criminal justice coordinator, who is overseeing the program.

Feinblatt told The New York Times "What we basically are doing is looking at sex offenders in the most aggressive way we can — putting them under a microscope. We know two things about sex offenders: one is that they have a high rate of recidivism, and the

second is that when they do harm, the harm is catastrophic."

The police department's Sex Offender Monitoring Unit would be increased from six investigators to 12. And the unit, along with probation and parole, would track daily reports from the Division of Criminal Justice Services to determine whether any of those targeted by the program have been arrested for other crimes and whether the addresses matched those previously given.

In Douglas County, which surrounds Omaha, the sheriff's department since last August has worked with the State Patrol investigators monitoring those sex offenders identified as being most likely to re-offend.

The program was launched after the head of the county's criminal investigations unit, Lt. Dean Olson, mapped out offenders' addresses and found out that 50 in the high-risk category lived within 1,000 feet of schools and day-care centers. Olson, a former sex crimes investigator with the FBI, said that if offenders commit another crime, it is most likely to occur within three to four years of being released from prison.

There are 67 high-risk offenders in the county, 63 who are deemed moderate risk, and 36 low risk. Yet while the monitoring program does let offenders know they are being watched, it does have its drawbacks.

For example, there are 380 cases waiting to be assessed by the State Patrol. Because of the backlog, Olson estimates there could be as many as 25 to 30 high-risk offenders living in Douglas County. Also, some 150 offenders have contested their assessed risk, so their names have not been released. And if offenders fail to notify the state when they move, investigators have to find them again before they can be monitored.

"The public is definitely worried about these guys," Deputy Tom Walter told The Omaha World-Herald. "I get calls every day from people concerned that their neighbor is a sex offender and they live by schools."

## First 'alumni' due from California sex-predator treatment program

A two-year treatment program in California for violent sexual predators who have been committed after serving criminal sentences will soon release at least one of its first two graduates into the community.

This month, Santa Clara Superior Court Judge Robert Baines ruled that Brian DeVries, 44, has completed the program and could continue his therapy as an outpatient. Baines gave the state Department of Mental Health three weeks to find DeVries a treatment provider and a place to live. The agency must also come up with a plan to monitor his day-to-day activities.

DeVries, convicted of molesting at least nine young boys in three states, voluntarily underwent surgical castration in August 2001.

Another graduate of the program, Cary Verse, 32, is also due for release. His petition was granted by Contra Costa Superior Court Judge John Minney on Jan. 24, although Verse will not be released until at least May 7. Prosecutors are fighting his release on the grounds that he has not completed

treatment.

Verse has a history of sexual violence. His most recent criminal offense was in 1992, when he sexually assaulted a man at a homeless shelter in the Richmond area. He was paroled in 1998, and was civilly committed to Atascadero State Hospital the following year.

The five-phase program was created in 1996 after the state's civil confinement law went into effect. When a state prison inmate with prior sexual convictions is ready to be paroled, he is screened by two psychologists who determine, in separate evaluations, whether the person has a mental disorder that makes him likely to re-offend, and whether that re-offense would be of a sexually violent, predatory nature.

"All those words are important because they all have to be present — not just violent, but predatory," Brian Haynes, a Contra Costa County prosecutor, told Law Enforcement News. After a hearing in superior court, the individual can be committed. "Just like if you were crazy as a bedbug, and you are sent to the state hospital in

Atascadero for a period of two years," he noted.

The program has not been in existence long enough to be evaluated, said Haynes. Between legal challenges to the statute, appeals and writs, it took several years before patients began participating in therapy, he said. Some 4,000 individuals have been screened.

The fourth phase of the treatment is making the transition from inpatient to outpatient, said Haynes. Verse, he said, has not yet finished that phase. He is still conflicted, said Haynes, about his sexual orientation and his adherence to the Jehovah's Witness faith he has embraced.

"One of the more difficult things will be to find appropriate housing," Haynes said. "Number one, it will have to be a place that will accept Verse, and number two, a place where he will not be in physical danger. There is bound to be some reaction from the public."

Verse has a one-year surgical implant of a testosterone-reducing drug, and will be monitored by a Global Positioning System while in public.



## Snow job

U.S. Park Police dig out their truck near the Washington Monument in Washington on Feb. 16, after a powerful snow storm blanketed the nation's capital and much of the East Coast. (Reuters)



McAndrew:

## Morale stinks. Here's why. Now what?

By John McAndrew

For several years now, police departments nationwide have been experiencing recruitment problems and an increase in employee attrition. As the shortage worsens, it begs the question of why police departments have been unable to recruit or retain qualified personnel. One readily identifiable culprit is low morale, which researchers have found to significantly influence officers' decision to leave police service — to say nothing of its link to other organizational problems, such as corruption and inefficiency.

In New York City, the police department since 1998 has experienced a sharp decline in the number of applicants taking its recruit exams, along with an exponential increase in the number of officers who retire or resign — and, again, many commentators have linked these problems to low morale. What has hampered the debate over officer morale in the NYPD, however, is a lack of hard empirical data. No recent scholarly research had been conducted to measure officers' attitudes.

With an eye toward filling this void, a cross-section of several hundred uniformed members of the NYPD was surveyed in the summer of 2001 to gauge the state of police morale and the factors that influence it. Police officers were the primary subjects, but a number of detectives, sergeants, lieutenants and captains were included as well, to allow for comparisons. The resulting data were then used to test seven hypotheses:

1. Overall morale in the NYPD during the time period studied could be characterized as low.
2. There would be no significant differences in morale between male and female officers.
3. There would be no significant differences in morale between officers of different ethnic groups.
4. Police officers would have lower morale than higher-ranking officers.
5. Police officers would have lower morale than detectives.
6. Length of police service would display an inverse relationship to officer morale (the greater an officer's length of service, the lower his morale level).
7. Respondents would more often cite police administrative practices as an area in need of improvement than they would some other facets of police work, such as danger or community hostility.

As it turned out, six of the seven hypotheses (all but No. 5) were supported at least in part by the data. (As noted below, the issue of race or ethnicity as a factor in morale produced ambiguous results.) More critically, though, this study indicated that the roots of the morale problem largely lie in management practices and are not intrinsic to police work in general. Police administrators, it appears, are a source of the problem; they must also, then, be a source of the solution.

### Higher rank, higher morale

Morale in the NYPD, which the majority of officers described as either "low" or "somewhat low," was not found to be a monolithic phenomenon. Fluctuations in morale levels were found to be linked to such factors as length of service, rank and, to a certain extent, ethnicity.

Rank and years of service were significant factors in officer morale, with higher ranking officials and officers with fewer years on the job reporting higher morale. The higher morale

(John McAndrew is a sergeant with the New York City Police Department, with nine years' service. This article is based on original thesis research he conducted for a master's degree in criminal justice from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.)



Employee morale is at an all time high.  
We must be paying them too much.

among higher ranks is perhaps no surprise. Those in supervisory or middle-management roles had devoted considerable time and effort to being promoted and felt an investment in the department after being promoted. They were rewarded with advancement and raises in pay, and they identified with the department to a greater degree and had a more positive outlook on the department and its future.

Police officers, on the other hand, were less likely to believe that their prospects for promotion were good, compared to the 82 percent of sergeants and above who felt their chances for another promotion were good.

Detectives, meanwhile, reported slightly lower morale than police officers — a finding that may appear counterintuitive, based on the greater degree of autonomy and prestige that

guishable. This phenomenon could be called "shield devaluation"; as the detective's job begins to resemble that of the police officer, the detective shield loses its luster.

### What gender gap?

In contrast, gender by itself had little or no impact on levels of officer morale; both male and female officers reported low morale, a finding that echoed earlier research on the police. Gender only appeared to have an impact in relation to officers' perception of how challenging the job was and the quality of service provided by the department. Male respondents felt more challenged by their job than females, and perceived the department as providing a better quality of service.

The gender differences may be explained by

**"What's driving down officer morale? The answer seems clear: an uncaring police administration and rude or disrespectful supervisors."**

detectives have historically enjoyed. Traditionally, police officers have regarded winning a gold shield as a "promotion"; detectives, while technically equal in rank to police officers, had an informally higher rank that carried with it greater independence and status.

The lower morale of detectives may speak to a decline in their status. At one time, detectives were viewed as the upper class of police society, with admittance to their ranks a matter of special appointment that offered more prestige, excitement and autonomy. However, in recent years the rank of detective has undergone major changes in the NYPD. The rank has evolved from a discretionary title to one that has become increasingly codified in civil service law. Administrative regulations and civil service law now define the designation, duties and requirements for the detective rank. In addition, police administrators have also re-designated as detective work entire categories of duties that were traditionally the duties of police officers. This has led to an increase in the number of detectives in the department, with the perhaps predictable result of a decline in status and prestige for the rank of detective, as the lines separating it from police officer have blurred.

As the distinction between police officer and detective lessened, the rank of detective becomes less desirable. One respondent described promotion to a detective as "a joke (I turned it down)." Consequently, the morale of officers and detectives is becoming indistin-

guishable. Of the officers sampled, 18.9 percent of female respondents described their assignments as administrative, compared to 6.7 percent of males. Administrative jobs in police departments are support functions that usually involve clerical work. The fact that males were more likely than females to perform enforcement functions and to consider their work challenging may be a reflection of the underrepresentation of males in the administrative posts (or, conversely, the overrepresentation of women in those jobs).

The impact of race and ethnicity on morale levels was ambiguous, even contradictory. The morale levels of Hispanic and white officers were nearly indistinguishable despite ethnic differences. The morale levels of black officers and those who identified their ethnicity as "other" were also found to be nearly indistinguishable. However, between the Hispanic/white and black/other categories, there existed significant differences in morale, with the latter group showing a higher level. Some of the ethnic differences appear to be attributable to differences in job assignments within the sample.

### "Conveyor" belts

That's not to say, however, that there weren't significant morale differences along ethnic and racial lines. Three items in the analysis were identified as "morale conveyers," or potential indicators of poor morale: willingness to choose

a career in the NYPD again; willingness to recommend the NYPD to close friends and relatives; and a belief that the department had been going downhill since graduation from the academy. White officers were less willing than blacks to choose the job again or to recommend it to others, and were more likely to perceive the police department as declining. Hispanics were also less willing than blacks to recommend the police department to others and more likely to perceive the police department as declining. Black officers were more likely to view the police organization as treating them well, to be satisfied in their careers, and less likely to perceive citizens as being very well served by the police department. Black officers still report low morale; it's just not as low as for other ethnic groups.

The exact reasons for these morale differences are not readily apparent from the data generated by this study, although one explanation may lie in the distribution of assignments among the respondents. Respondents assigned to the Housing Bureau were overrepresented among blacks and others — in overwhelming disproportion — in comparison to Hispanic and white respondents. Survey respondents assigned to the Patrol Services Bureau, the greatest number, had a significantly lower overall morale level than those in the Housing Bureau, who had the highest Total Morale Scores of all bureau and divisions. Differences in morale could be the product of the different culture that has traditionally existed among Housing cops.

Within the Housing Bureau, black and white respondents ceased to have significant differences, and any such differences were in the form of white respondents reporting higher morale than blacks, which ran counter to the findings for the overall sample. (The subset of officers assigned to the Housing Bureau, however, consisted of a relatively small number for analysis, and thus any conclusions must be deemed tentative, subject to further research.)

### Who are the bad guys?

Less in need of analysis is the question of what's driving down officer morale. The answer there seems clear: an uncaring police administration and rude or disrespectful supervisors. Morale was linked to the perception of support and appropriate recognition from management and supervisors, and the degree to which supervisors' performance expectations were regarded as realistic. Only 5.6 percent of officers considered police administrators to be responsive to and supportive of their needs. More than half felt they did not receive appropriate recognition from their supervisor for an unusually good job, and more than one-quarter viewed their supervisors' performance expectations as unrealistic.

Unsupportive administrators and ill treatment by supervisors were common themes in written comments appended to the survey responses. Several officers stated that the department's recent "Courtesy, Professionalism, and Respect" community-relations campaign should be applied internally. Said one officer: "The lack of 'CPR' between supervisory

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# Florida sheriffs find hybrid cars electrifying

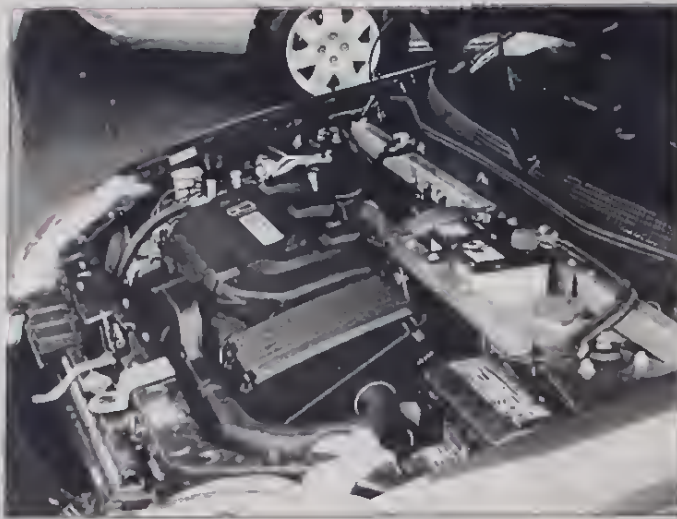
Continued from Page 1

work gets around. "I think we'll have 10 times more orders than we had last year," he said.

Atlas, who drives one of the hybrids, said the cars get roughly 52 miles to the gallon in the city, and 45 miles to the gallon on the highway. By contrast, the Crown Vic gets only 11 miles per gallon. But the department still uses the bigger cars for enforcement duties, such as traffic accidents, pursuits, and transporting prisoners.

The hybrids only need to be refueled twice a month, saving the department an estimated \$103 a month in gasoline for each vehicle. Atlas said an informal survey by the department, in which those assigned the cars jotted down mileage and the date and time when they bought gas, found that at a cost of \$1.12 a gallon, they would save \$5,892 in fuel costs over a six-year period. And although small, one detective found the compact car had enough room in the trunk for two armored vests, a pair of rubber boots and a shotgun.

The Prius runs on gasoline and has two electric motors, a large one for propulsion and a smaller one for charging the battery and assisting the other. The electric motors run off a battery that is



Under the hood of the hybrid Honda Insight.

recharged every time the car brakes. At traffic lights, both engines shut off to save fuel and reduce pollution. More than 40,000 Priuses have been sold in the United States in the past three years.

Hybrids run just like any other cars, said Atlas, noting that it is a common misperception that they have to be charged up. "The equipment knows to switch back and forth, except when

you're accelerating on the highway," she said.

"The [fuel economy] figures were higher than that, but we just stayed in the middle, didn't overestimate or overbeat our drum here," said Atlas. "But again, 52 in the city? My God, what kind of car does 52 on the highway anymore, must less city with stop-and-start driving."

## Headlines are not enough

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(22803)

## Forum: What's behind low morale

Continued from Page 9

personnel and cops [was the] determining factor in the low morale problem that currently exists in the NYPD."

Salary and supervision were the two areas cited most frequently as being in need of improvement. Only 2.3 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "My current salary is appropriate for the work I do," and 73 percent called for a salary increase. Low salary was referred to in the written comments far more than any other issue.

### The Job, not the work

Overall, improving morale comes down to administrative factors and not negative issues considered inherent to police work, such as physical danger. What needs improvement? Key areas cited by respondents include salary, the quality of supervision, organizational/public support, physical conditions at work, and nepotism/favoritism. Most of the respondents' comments regarding lack of support focused on police management and the overall criminal justice system, and not the public. Some comments were telling. "Police brass does not respect the average patrol cop," said one respondent. Said another: "The Department has to back up PO's that get into jams while performing their duties."

The study's findings in regard to officers' morale, and the factors that depress it, are important to the future of the NYPD and law enforcement in general. For example, the unwillingness of members to recommend the police department as a career choice has profound implications for the recruitment problems the NYPD is

currently experiencing. The department itself has recognized that active-duty members are often the best recruiters, and has encouraged them to actively recruit relatives and friends. Survey data indicate that these attempts at encouragement have been unsuccessful. More than three-quarters of respondents say they would not encourage relatives or close friends to join the department. Low morale is clearly a key factor in the current recruitment and retention crisis facing the NYPD.

There is considerable consensus in the literature of policing that management is one of the principal causes of low morale among officers, and the findings from this research support that consensus. Historically, police officers have had an uneasy, even antagonistic relationship with the management of the NYPD. However, relations today appear to be at an exceptionally low level. Today, the NYPD is characterized by a resentful and demoralized workforce that is resigning or retiring at an accelerating pace, begging the question "why?" The causes behind the dysfunctional relationship between officers and their department are organizational and not intrinsic to police work. Cops are miserable because of "The Job," not because of the work they do. Pathologies that are hardwired into current police administrative structures and management practices breed low morale and discontent among the rank and file. Addressing these problems in the current environment of declining budgets and dramatically increasing responsibilities presents a momentous challenge to leaders in both law enforcement and politics.

## Compstat puts down roots far from NYC

Continued from Page 1

department's six sergeants responsible for one of six neighborhoods, and two lieutenants responsible for the town's two precincts.

"It's like [Compstat] because we're comparing statistical data per areas of responsibility," Capt. Stan Gragg told LEN. "It accomplishes similar responses as Compstat because it achieves more ownership within the community as compared to the regular way of doing business."

During the past year, ACE has allowed the department to address quality-of-life issues, as well as drive its Part I Uniform Crime Report offenses to below their 2001 levels, even as Mount Pleasant's population grows, said Gragg.

"I think it's just going to continue to get better," he said.

Eventually, the agency will be able to get a better understanding of crime in the area when mapping software is added to the program. Gragg said a crime-analysis component will also be added soon.

It is not the size of a department that

determines whether Compstat works, but rather the accountability to which middle-managers are held, said John Yohe, a consultant who worked on New York City's Compstat system.

"If there's no accountability on the part of the concerned commander, it's not going to work," he told The (Charleston) Post and Courier. "The basic philosophy is we want to run this like a business." And like a business, some people lose their jobs if they do not perform. In the first three years of Compstat in New York, said Yohe, three-quarters of all precinct commanders were replaced.

The Mount Pleasant department's use of ACE will not be so severe, said Gragg. Officials want to encourage officers to take innovative approaches to solving problems.

"We haven't had anyone transferred," he said.

### MOVING?

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# Florida sheriffs take over child protection

The Hillsborough County, Fla., Sheriff's Office is due to become the next agency contracted by the state to take over the task of child protective investigations, under a plan that would shift some of the burden away from the overwhelmed state Department of Children and Families.

So far, the experiment is underway in Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota and Manatee counties. Hillsborough will join — if funding for the initiative does not get derailed — in April. Citrus County is also being tapped for the project. State officials, including Gov. Jeb Bush, have called for the privatization of child welfare services by January 2004.

According to Tom Berlinger, director of law enforcement services for the Florida Sheriff's Association, some agencies have been handling the task for years. While those already under contract would say that it is working well, he told Law Enforcement News, there are some sheriffs who "would not want to touch it with a 10-foot-pole" for fear of being blamed should a child "fall through the cracks."

There has been a rash of notorious cases in the past year involving children under the care of Florida's DCF, noted Berlinger. Among these are Rilya Wilson, a 5-year-old foster child whose disappearance led to the resignation last year of the agency's secretary, and a 2-year-old boy who allegedly died of abuse. An investigator from Polk County pleaded no contest in 2002 to falsely claiming she had visited the boy. Wilson remains missing.

"What the concerns are of the sheriffs is that no matter how hard you try, no matter how good a job you do, no matter how professional you get, no matter how much training you do for your people, there's going to be a kid who falls through the cracks," Berlinger said. "And when that happens, the sheriffs are concerned about the political ramifications. I think that's probably the single largest objection."

Perhaps the second largest, however, is money.

Hillsborough County Sheriff Cal Henderson told The Tampa Tribune this month that there was no "done deal" until he was satisfied of the state's financial commitment.

State Representative Sandra Murman, a Tampa Republican, said that \$960,000 has been approved for the transition, with the rest of the \$13 million budget proposed by the county for the first year to be funded incrementally. The plan calls for the hiring of 200 employees, including 130 child protection investigators and supervisors. Eight sworn deputies, including a captain and four detectives, will also be assigned, and 24 community service officers will administer staff at three service centers.

The money will be allocated to the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department from the portion of the state budget usually set aside for DCF, Murman told The Tribune. The next allotment of funds would be received on July 1, when the sheriff plans to hire 16 more investigators. The effort should be fully ready to go by Oct. 1, when 43 investigators will be in place and Henderson opens the North Service Center in Tampa.

Sheriff's Chief Deputy David Gee said he wanted the Legislature to approve a mechanism that would keep funding the transition in the future. "We don't want to have to do this all over

again," Gee told The Tribune.

In order to get the sheriffs on board, the state has sweetened the pot. In the case of Pinellas County, Sheriff Everett Rice, who took over child protective investigations in 1999, received more funding for the task than had DCF. His agency received \$1.6 million for 71 new Ford Contours and laptop computers. Pay for investigators was also in-

creased, and Rice put into the budget dollars for overtime.

"Child protection is the top, highest priority right now, and we know that we have to fund that right to get what we want out of it," said Murman. "We haven't been doing that in the past."

What the contracts will do, said Berlinger, is involve sheriffs in the first step of investigation. Normally, law

enforcement does not come into play until criminal charges are warranted, but under the plan, sheriff's investigators would look into claims of neglect, as well.

"There are a lot of calls that come into the 1-800 child abuse hotline that might be, 'My next door neighbor is a single mom with six kids, the place is an absolute mess and they're living in

squalor,'" Berlinger said. "The contract is really to do the social service aspect of the job, as opposed to the law enforcement. We're charged with doing the law enforcement anyway and we don't have a problem with that. We don't want to be going and having 90 percent of those hotline calls be social service in nature, and having to handle them for free."



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## How's your morale?

If you're like NYPD officers, it's nothing to write home about. A study looks at who's got the blues, and why.  
**Forum, Page 9.**



## Hiding in plain sight:

Despite Megan's Law, thousands of sex offenders nationwide can't be accounted for. **Story, Page 1.**

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### What They Are Saying:

**"I think the problem begins with the sex offenders themselves. We are actually asking the most cunning of our criminals to take part in an honor system."**

— Laura Ahearn, executive director of the group Parents for Megan's Law, on research showing that thousands of convicted sex offenders go unaccounted for, often by simply not bothering to register with authorities. (Story, Page 1.)